

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. In a system that includes a processor and a display device on which video programming can be displayed, a method for transitioning to a video advertisement by displaying a related banner advertisement, the method comprising the acts of:

generating, on the display device, a display screen on which a video advertisement is to be displayed, the display screen being generated at a time prior to a time at which the video advertisement is available to be displayed;

displaying a banner advertisement on the display screen at a region that coincides with a region where the video advertisement is to be displayed, the banner advertisement having subject matter that is related to that of the video advertisement; and

when the video advertisement becomes available to be displayed, replacing the banner advertisement with the video advertisement.

2. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the display screen comprises an electronic program guide.

3. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the display screen comprises a background region.

4. A method as recited in claim 3, wherein at least one of (i) another banner advertisement and (ii) the banner advertisement is displayed in the background region.

5. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the banner advertisement is selected from a plurality of banner advertisements, at least two of the plurality of banner advertisements deliverable to the processor upon different delivery streams.

6. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the banner advertisement is stored locally to the processor.

7. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the video advertisement is selected from a plurality of video advertisements, at least two of the plurality of video advertisements deliverable to the processor upon different delivery streams.

8. A method as recited in claim 7, wherein the processor selects that video advertisement to be displayed upon the display screen, the processor selecting the video advertisement based upon at least one of (i) demographic information related to the viewer of the display screen and (ii) prior viewing activities of the viewer of the display screen.

9. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the act of:

receiving at least one video stream comprising a plurality of video advertisements, each of the plurality of video advertisements comprising at least one trigger; and

analyzing the at least one trigger to identify the time when the video advertisement is to be displayed upon the display device and the subject matter of the video advertisement.

10. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the displaying act comprises:

identifying the video advertisement to be displayed upon the display device;

identifying the subject matter of the video advertisement;

selecting the banner advertisement having subject matter that is related to the

subject matter of the video advertisement from a plurality of banner advertisements;

and

displaying the banner advertisement on the display screen.

11. In a system that includes a processor and a display device on which video programming can be displayed, a method for displaying video advertising content to a viewer by way of the display device, the method comprising the acts of:

receiving at least one trigger from a first video stream communicating with the processor, the at least one trigger defining a time when a first video advertisement in the first video stream is to be displayed, on the display device, on a display screen;

displaying a first banner advertisement upon the display device until the time is reached, the first banner advertisement having subject matter related to that of the video advertisement; and

upon reaching the time, transitioning between the first banner advertisement and the first video advertisement to display the first video advertisement to the viewer.

12. A method as recited in claim 11, wherein the act of displaying comprises the acts of:

retrieving the display screen comprising an advertisement box; and

retrieving the first banner advertisement and displaying the first banner advertisement within the advertisement box.

13. A method as recited in claim 12, wherein the act of transitioning comprises the acts of:

ceasing displaying the first banner advertisement within the advertisement box; and

upon ceasing displaying the first banner advertisement, displaying the video advertising content within the advertisement box.

14. A method as recited in claim 11, wherein the first video advertisement comprises video advertising content and at least one trigger.

15. A method as recited in claim 14, wherein, the video advertising content comprises at least one package, the at least one package comprising at least one of (i) a source identifier defining where the processor is capable of retrieving the video advertising content is receivable and (ii) a data file containing the video advertising content.

16. A method as recited in claim 11, further comprising the acts of:

analyzing a plurality of video advertisements deliverable upon the first video stream, each of the plurality of video advertisements comprising a video content identifier defining the type of video advertising content associated with the video advertisement;

identifying at least one viewer preference of the viewer, the at least one preference defining which type of video advertising content a viewer is more likely to watch than other types of video advertising content; and

retrieving the first video advertisement in compliance with the at least one viewer preference.

17. A method as recited in claim 11, further comprising the acts of:

analyzing a delivery schedule defining at least one of (i) a time, and (ii) a day for delivering the first video advertisement to the display device;

in response to analyzing the delivery schedule, identifying a currently viewable video advertisement on the first video stream, the currently viewable video advertisement comprising a start time and a stop time; and

identifying the first video advertisement from the first video stream, the first video advertisement being the next available video advertisement viewable after the stop time of the currently viewable video advertisement.

18. A method as recited in claim 11, further comprising the acts of:

analyzing the first video advertisement, the first video advertisement comprising a stop trigger configured to identify the time when the video advertisement content is to cease being displayed upon the display device and a plurality of other triggers;

tracking the plurality of other triggers to identify the time remaining from the current time until the stop trigger is to be received by the processor; and

upon receiving the stop trigger, transitioning between the first video advertisement and another advertisement.

19. A method as recited in claim 18, wherein the another advertisement is selected from the group consisting of (i) a video advertisement and (ii) a banner advertisement.

20. A method as recited in claim 18, further comprising the acts of:

identifying a second video advertisement from a second video stream communicating with the processor, the second video advertisement comprising video advertising content and at least one trigger; and

in response to receiving the stop trigger, transitioning between the second banner advertisement and the advertising content of the second video advertisement to display the video advertising content to the viewer.

21. A computer product for implementing, in a system that includes a processor and a display device on which television programming can be displayed, a method for displaying video advertising content to a viewer, the video advertising content selectable from at least one video advertisement content deliverable upon at least one video stream, the computer program product comprising:

a computer readable medium carrying computer-executable instructions for implementing the method, wherein the computer-executable instructions comprise:

program code means for receiving a first video advertisement from a first video stream of the at least one video stream communicating with the processor, the first video advertisement comprising video advertising content and at least one trigger defining time information regarding the video advertising content;

program code means for analyzing the time information of the at least one trigger to identify the time when the video advertising content is to be displayed upon a display device;

program code means for displaying a first banner advertisement on the display device; and

program code means for transitioning between the first banner advertisement and the advertising content of the first video advertisement, in response to analyzing the trigger, to display the video advertising content to the viewer.

22. A computer product as recited in claim 21, wherein the first banner advertisement comprises advertising content and a banner content identifier.

23. A computer product as recited in claim 21, wherein the first video advertisement comprises at least one announcement and at least one package, the at least one announcement notifying the processor of the availability of the first video advertisement.

24. A computer program product as recited in claim 21, wherein the video advertising content is defined by at least one package, the at least one package comprising at least one of (i) an identifier defining a source from which the video advertising content is receivable and (ii) a data file containing the video advertising content.

25. A computer product as recited in claim 21, wherein the program code means for displaying comprises:

program code means for retrieving a display screen comprising at least one advertisement box; and

program code means for retrieving the first banner advertisement and displaying the first banner advertisement within one of the at least one advertisement box.

26. A computer product as recited in claim 25, wherein the program code means for transitioning comprises when the first banner advertisement is not displayed within the at least one advertisement box, program code means for displaying the video advertising content within the at least one advertisement box.

27. A computer product as recited in claim 21, wherein the program code means for retrieving comprises:

program code means for analyzing the at least one video advertisement deliverable upon at least one video stream, each of the at least one video advertisement comprising a video content identifier defining the type of video advertising content associated with the video advertisement;

program code means for identifying at least one viewer preference of the viewer, the at least one preference defining which type of video advertising content a viewer is more likely to watch than other types of video advertising content; and

program code means for retrieving the first video advertisement in compliance with the at least one viewer preference.

28. A computer product as recited in claim 21, further comprising:

program code means for analyzing data representative of a schedule for the delivery of the first video advertisement to the display device, the schedule being accessible by the processor;

in response to analyzing the data, program code means for identifying a currently viewable video advertisement on the first video stream, the currently

viewable video advertisement comprising a start time and a stop time defined by at least one trigger; and

program code means for identifying the first video advertisement from the first video stream, the first video being the next available video advertisement after the stop time of the currently viewable video advertisement.

29. A computer product as recited in claim 21, further comprising:

program code means for analyzing the first video advertisement to identify a stop trigger identifying the time when the video advertisement content is to cease being displayed upon the display device;

program code means for tracking the first video advertisement deliverable to the processor to identify the amount of time remaining until the stop trigger is to be received by the processor; and

upon receiving the stop trigger, program code means for transitioning between the first video advertisement and a second banner advertisement to display the second banner advertisement to the viewer.

30. A computer product as recited in claim 29, wherein the program code means for tracking comprises:

program code means for identifying a plurality of intermediate triggers within the first video advertisement, the plurality of intermediate triggers defining a plurality of time segments of the first video advertisement; and

program code means for tracking the plurality of time segment to determine the number of time segments remaining to be played to the viewer.

31. A computer product as recited in claim 29, further comprising:

in response to identifying the stop trigger, program code means for identifying a second video advertisement from a second video stream communicating with the processor, the second video advertisement comprising video advertising content and at least one trigger; and

in response to receiving the stop trigger, program code means for transitioning between the second banner advertisement and the advertising content of the second video advertisement to display the video advertising content to the viewer.

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32. In a system that includes a processor and a display device on which video programming can be displayed, a method for targeting a viewer with video advertising content based upon the viewers preferences, the method comprising the acts of:

retrieving preference data from a data source, the preference data representing viewing selections of the viewer;

displaying a first banner advertisement on the display device, the first banner advertisement displaying advertising content in compliance with the preference data;

identifying a plurality of video advertisements deliverable to the processor by a plurality of video streams, each video advertisement of the plurality of video advertisements comprising video advertising content, at least one trigger, and a video content identifier;

analyzing each of the plurality of video streams to identify at least one video advertisements of the plurality of video advertisements comprising the video content identifier in compliance with the preference data; and

in response to analyzing the video content identifier of the at least one video advertisement, transitioning between the first banner advertisement and the least one video advertisement of the plurality of video advertisements to display the video advertising content to the viewer.

33. A method as recited in claim 32, wherein the data source is at least one of (i) a data source local to the processor and (ii) a data source remote to the processor.

34. A method as recited in claim 32, wherein the preference data is defined by at least one of (i) the viewer's prior viewing activities and (ii) demographic information relating to the viewer.

35. A method as recited in claim 32, wherein the first banner advertisement comprises banner advertisement content and at least one identifier of banner advertisement type.

36. A method as recited in claim 32, wherein the act of displaying a first banner advertisement comprises the acts of:

retrieving a display screen, the display screen comprising an advertisement box; and

retrieving the first banner advertisement and displaying the first banner advertisement within the advertisement box.

37. A method as recited in claim 36, wherein retrieving the display screen comprises retrieving the display screen from at least one of (i) a mass storage device in communication with the processor and (ii) a remote source.

38. A method as recited in claim 32, wherein each of the plurality of video streams is an MPEG stream.

39. A method as recited in claim 32, wherein each of the plurality of video streams comprises at least one of (i) an MPEG stream and (ii) a data stream.

40. A method as recited in claim 32, wherein each video advertisement comprises at least one of (i) zero or more triggers, (ii) one or more announcements, and (iii) one or more packages.

41. A method as recited in claim 40, wherein the act of analyzing each of the plurality of video streams comprises the act of analyzing each video content identifier to identify those video advertisements having a video content identifier that complies with the preference data.

42. A method as recited in claim 32, further comprising the acts of:

in response to transitioning between the first banner advertisement and the at least one video advertisement, identifying a second banner advertisement having a banner content identifier in compliance with the preference data;

identifying a second video advertisement having a video content identifier in compliance with the preference data; and

in response to identifying the second banner advertisement and the second video advertisement, preparing to transition from the first video advertisement to the second banner advertisement and from the second banner advertisement to the second video advertisement.